

*If you have  
any questions,  
ask your  
physician, nurse  
or registered  
dietitian.*

## Eating After Gastric Surgery

This brochure will describe the diet you should follow after your gastric (stomach) surgery. Follow these guidelines for 6 to 8 weeks after surgery as you recover:

- Start by eating 1 or 2 foods per meal. One of these foods should be a food high in protein.
- Over time, slowly add more foods (in small amounts) to your daily eating plan.
- Choose soft and well-cooked foods.
- Choose grain foods made with white or refined flour. These foods should have less than 2 grams of fiber per serving.

After gastric surgery, some patients may develop a condition known as “dumping syndrome.” It is caused by food passing from the stomach to the small intestine too quickly. This happens within 30 minutes after eating. Signs may include:

- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Cramping
- Dizziness
- A cold sweat

## Avoiding dumping syndrome

You can avoid dumping syndrome by making some changes in your diet and eating habits after surgery.

Steps you can take include:

- **Eat at least 6 times per day, with 3 small meals and 3 snacks.** You may be able to eat larger portions over time as you are able, but keep servings small at first.
- Separate liquids from meals. Drink liquids 30 minutes before or after meals, but not with your food. Remember that soup and milk are liquids. With time, you may be able to drink small amounts of liquid (about 1/2 cup) with meals as you are able.
- Eat slowly and chew food well. Try to relax while eating.
- Avoid concentrated sweets, sugar and foods sweetened with sugar (see food lists). Limit fruit to 2 or 3 servings per day and avoid fruit juice due to its natural sugar content. Read labels on “sugar-free” products. They may contain other types of sugar such as syrups, honey, fruit juice concentrate, fructose, lactose, dextrose, maltose, sorbitol, xylitol or mannitol.
- Lying down right after eating may help your symptoms.

- Include a high-protein food with each meal or snack, such as meat, poultry, fish, eggs, cheese, milk, yogurt and creamy nut butters. Nuts, dried beans and peas also are high in protein. Add these later — after the first 6 to 8 weeks of recovery.
- You may wish to take a multivitamin if you have diarrhea or are not able to eat many foods. Depending on the type of surgery, your physician or registered dietitian may suggest specific vitamin supplements for you.

**Call your physician or registered dietitian if you continue to have dumping syndrome or you cannot maintain your normal weight.**

Refer to the recommended food choices chart and example 1-day menu for help with meal planning during the recovery period 6 to 8 weeks after your surgery.

### Recommended food choices

Food type	Foods recommended	Foods not recommended
<b>Milk and milk products</b>	<p>Choose lactose-free products if you have lactose intolerance after surgery.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Buttermilk</li> <li>• Evaporated, skim and 1% milk</li> <li>• Soy milk</li> <li>• Yogurt with no added sugar</li> <li>• Powdered milk</li> <li>• Cheese</li> <li>• Low-fat, low-sugar ice cream</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chocolate milk</li> <li>• Other milk products made with added sugar</li> </ul>
<b>Meat and other proteins</b>	<p>Include protein in every meal and snack.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tender, well-cooked meats, poultry, fish and eggs</li> <li>• Soy foods prepared without added fat</li> <li>• Smooth nut butters</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fried meat, poultry and fish</li> <li>• Lunch meats, such as bologna and salami</li> <li>• Sausage, hot dogs and bacon</li> <li>• Tough or chewy meats</li> <li>• Dried beans and peas, such as pinto or kidney beans</li> <li>• Nuts and chunky nut butters</li> </ul>
<b>Grains</b>	<p>Choose grain foods with less than 2 grams of fiber per serving.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• White flour</li> <li>• Bread, bagels, rolls, crackers and pasta made from white or refined flour</li> <li>• Cold or hot cereals made from white or refined flour</li> <li>• Cereals that have no added sugar</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whole-grain flour</li> <li>• Breads, bagels, rolls, crackers and pasta with more than 2 grams of fiber per serving or made from whole-grain flour</li> <li>• Cold or hot cereals with more than 2 grams of fiber per serving or made from whole-grains</li> <li>• Cereals with added sugar</li> </ul>

Food type	Foods recommended	Foods not recommended
<b>Vegetables</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most well-cooked vegetables without seeds or skins</li> <li>• Potatoes without skin</li> <li>• Lettuce</li> <li>• Strained vegetable juice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All raw vegetables except lettuce</li> <li>• Any cooked vegetables served with skins or seeds</li> <li>• Beets</li> <li>• Broccoli, Brussels sprouts and cabbage</li> <li>• Cauliflower</li> <li>• Greens</li> <li>• Corn</li> <li>• Potato skins</li> </ul>
<b>Fruits</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Canned, soft fruits without added sugar</li> <li>• Bananas and melon</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All raw fruits except banana and melons</li> <li>• Dried fruits including prunes and raisins</li> <li>• Fruit juice</li> <li>• Canned fruit in sugar or syrup</li> </ul>
<b>Fats</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oils, butter and margarine</li> <li>• Cream and cream cheese</li> <li>• Mayonnaise</li> </ul>	
<b>Beverages</b>	<p>Sweetened coffee and tea with artificial sweeteners only (saccharin/Sweet’N Low®, aspartame/Equal®/NutraSweet®, sucralose/Splenda®, acesulfame potassium (Sunette®)/Sweet One®).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decaffeinated coffee</li> <li>• Caffeine-free tea</li> <li>• Sugar-free soft drinks without caffeine</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Caffeinated coffee and tea</li> <li>• Alcoholic beverages</li> <li>• Beverages made with sugar, corn syrup or honey</li> <li>• Fruit juices or fruit drinks</li> </ul>
<b>Other</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sugar</li> <li>• Honey, syrup</li> <li>• Sorbitol and xylitol (sugar alcohols)</li> <li>• Foods that list sugar, honey, syrup, xylitol or sorbitol as one of the first 3 ingredients on the food label</li> </ul>

## Example 1-day menu

<b>Breakfast</b>
1 scrambled egg 1 slice white toast 2 teaspoons margarine 1 cup decaffeinated coffee (30 to 60 minutes after breakfast)
<b>Morning snack</b>
2 ounces cheddar cheese 6 saltine crackers 1/2 cup canned peaches, no added sugar 1 cup soy milk, no added sugar (30 to 60 minutes after snack)
<b>Lunch</b>
1/2 cup tuna salad 6 saltine crackers 1 slice white bread 12 ounces sugar-free soda (30 to 60 minutes after lunch)
<b>Afternoon snack</b>
1 cup yogurt, no added sugar
<b>Dinner</b>
5 ounces roast beef 1 cup mashed potatoes 1 cup green beans 1 cup caffeine-free tea (30 to 60 minutes after dinner)
<b>Evening snack</b>
1/2 plain bagel 2 tablespoons cream cheese 1 cup soy milk, no added sugar (30 to 60 minutes after snack)